

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The present Amendment is in response to the Office Action having a mailing date of January 20, 2005. Claims 1-20 are pending in the present Application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 5, 12 and 15. Applicant has also added claims 21-25. Consequently, claims 1-25 remain pending in the present Application.

Applicant has amended claims 1, 12, and 15 to recite that the at least one print spooler and uses the at least one relational database to perform at least one of scheduling the at least one print job and matching the at least one print job with at least one of the plurality of printers. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 12, and 15 can be found in the specification, page 9, lines 3-6. Applicant has amended claim 2 to recite that a portion of the print objects “correspond to” the plurality of printers. Applicant has amended claim 5 to depend upon independent claim 1 instead of claim 2. Applicant has also amended the specification to correct a grammatical error. Applicant has added claims 21-25. Support for claims 21, 22, and 24 can be found in the specification, page 8, lines 1-18. Claims 23 and 25 correspond to claim 5. Further, Applicant has amended Fig. 1, submitted herewith, to correct a misdesignation of an element. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 2, 4, 5, and 7 because claim to recited that the “plurality of print objects includes the plurality of printers”. The Examiner indicated that this language was awkward. Consequently, Applicant has amended claim 2 to recite that “a portion of the plurality of print objects corresponds to the plurality of printers”. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner’s objection to claim 2 has been addressed. Further, claims 4, 5, and 7 were rejected because of their dependence upon claim 2. Claim 5 no longer depends upon claim 2. Further, because claim 2 has been amended,

claims 4 and 7 no longer contain the language cited by the Examiner as awkward. Consequently, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's objection to claims 4, 5, and 7 has also been addressed.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner objected to the specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the recitation of the "second portion" in claims 11 and 20. The Examiner assumed that the recitation of the second portion found support in the specification, page 7, lines 3-14 and page 11, lines 14-21.

Applicant respectfully draws the Examiner's attention to page 10, lines 6-15, particularly lines 8-10. This portion of the specification describes utilizing a query that only retrieves the status for those objects that have had their status updated after a previous query. This cited portion of the specification also indicates that the GUI is updated based on the results of the query. The objects having a status that was updated after a previous query correspond to the recited "second portion" in claims 11 and 20. These objects are not necessarily part of a different part of the hierarchy. Instead, as described in the specification, these objects may have a status that was more recently updated. Consequently, Applicant respectfully submits that the specification provides proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings because Figure 1 had an element (element 22) that was misdesignated as 24. Applicant has provided herewith a replacement drawing sheet for Figure 1 in which misdesignation of the element 22 has been corrected. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner's objection to the drawings has been addressed.

In the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,466,935 B1 (Stuart).

Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. Claim 1 recites a system for performing distributed printing including at least one print spooler and at least one relational database coupled with the print spooler. The relational database(s) include a plurality of tables that store a plurality of print objects. Claim 1 further recites that the at least one print spooler is configured to utilize the at least one relational database to perform at least one of scheduling print jobs and matching the print jobs with at least one of the plurality of printers. Claims 12 and 15 recite an analogous system and method. Because of the use of the systems and method recited in claims 1, 12, and 15, system resources can be more efficiently used. Specification, page 11, lines 12-13.

Although Stuart functions for its intended purpose, Stuart fails to teach or suggest automatically scheduling print jobs using the print spooler or matching print jobs with printers. Stuart describes a system for controlling a manufacturing process. Stuart, Abstract, lines 1-2. In the system of Stuart, a work item having the highest priority is retrieved from the database, the work corresponding to the object performed, and the object's status updated. Stuart, Abstract and col. 4, lines 37-55. The work item could include printing, as well as other jobs. Although Stuart indicates the system is self-scheduling, this is apparently based on priorities that have already been calculated. Stuart, col. 4, lines 37-54. These priorities which determine the scheduling are indicated to be changeable by a user. Stuart, col. 4, lines 56-63. However, Applicant can find no indication in Stuart that the priorities, and thus the scheduling, is determined by the combination of a print spooler and the relational database. Instead, the priority, and thus the scheduling, is apparently determined by the user. Moreover, Applicant has found no indication in Stuart that a print spooler and relational database match print jobs with printers. Stated differently, Applicant has found no mention of the system of Stuart matching

particular tasks with the appropriate device. Instead, Stuart appears to simply take a highest priority (and thus scheduled) task and provide the job to the already selected device that performs the task. Thus, Stuart fails to teach the combination of the print spooler(s) and relational database(s) scheduling jobs or matching jobs with printers. Consequently, Stuart fails to teach or suggest the systems and method recited in claims 1, 12, and 15. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 12, and 15 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2-11 and 21 depend upon independent claim 1. Claims 13-14 and 22-23 depend upon claim 12. Claims 16-20 and 24-25 depend upon claim 15. Consequently, the arguments herein apply with full force to claims 2-11, 13-14, 16-20 and 21-25. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-11, 13-14, 16-20 and 21-25 are also allowable over the cited references.

Furthermore, claims 5 and 21-25 are separately allowable. Claims 5, 23, and 25 recite that continuous printing may be performed. Thus, printing can be achieved even though specific print servers are down. Specification, page 9, line 23-page 10, line 5. Applicant has found no mention in Stuart of performing continuous printing. Claims 21, 22, and 24 recite that the relational database(s) and/or the print spooler(s) reside on multiple servers. Applicant has found no mention in Stuart of storing portions of either a print spooler or a relational database on different servers. Thus, Stuart fails to teach or suggest claims 5 and 21-25. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5 and 21-25 are allowable over the cited references.

Applicant's attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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